

Story #661 (1976 Tapes #17 and #18)

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Location: Village of
Hilmiye, kaza of
İnegöl, Province
of Bursa

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The Substitute Bride

Once there was and once there was not, when the sieve was Tekerleme
in the straw, when jinns played cirit¹ in the old Turkish bath,
when lice were barbers, and the camel was a town crier, when I
was rocking my father's and my mother's cradles--well, back in
that time, there was a man who had a son. One day when the boy
was asleep, he dreamed of a beard--white man wearing a white
turban--white and a robe--green. The man was a saintly wise man. He
told the boy to go to a certain fountain and wait until foam--on water
formed on the water of the fountain. When it did form, he was to
girl--beaut. hp drink the foam and a beautiful girl would appear. The next
foam on water--drinking of morning the boy went to the fountain and waited. When foam formed
on the water, he drank, and the most beautiful girl--most + beautiful in world in the world
suddenly appeared. The boy pulled the girl out of the fountain
and set her on the edge. He then quickly went home to start
wedding preparations.

In the meanwhile, a band of gipsy women were passing by the
fountain. When they looked up and saw the boy departing, they

¹Cirit is an ancient Turkish form of jousting, a javelin-
throwing contest played on horseback.

SUPERNATURAL
WIFE / Boy
Love

gipsy
gipsy women women - gipsy

joy -- crying for

shah -- word used in extravagant praise of a man

cried for joy. "What a beautiful Shah! Your Shah is beautiful!

I am beautiful. What is this beautiful Shah doing here?" And slammed their water jugs to the ground, shattering them in joy.

The beautiful girl could not stand it any longer, and she cried back, "Mother, that Shah is not for you. He is mine."

The gipsy women were disappointed to hear this, but a young gipsy stepped out from among the women and begged the beautiful girl to take her with her. After hearing her beg a long time, the beautiful girl consented to take the gipsy girl with her and the gipsy women left.

By now, the wedding preparations were about completed, and the wedding would soon take place. The village people together with the bridegroom started towards the fountain to get the bride.

The beautiful girl felt a bit tired from all the excitement, and she told the gipsy girl she would lay her head down in her lap to rest briefly before the wedding. She told the gipsy girl to examine her hair for lice while she was resting. As soon as the beautiful girl laid her head down, the gipsy girl grabbed her and rolled her down a bank and into a lake, where she drowned. Where a drop of her blood had spilled onto the ground, a beautiful red rose -- red rose sprang up. | Transferring

When the villagers came to get the bride, they saw a dirty, dark gipsy girl standing by the fountain on top of the hill.

The bridegroom could not believe his eyes and he kept repeating

²This is the hyperbole of excitement. The boy is not literally a shah.

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that he had found the world's most beautiful girl. The villagers looked at the gipsy girl and wondered if this was supposed to be a world beauty. They asked the girl, "Who are you?"

She said, "~~I~~was beautiful just a short time ago, but then I looked down on the ground and darkened, and I looked at the sky and grew ugly."

The villagers helped the gipsy girl to mount, and they all started for the village. Just as they were about to leave that area, the young man, seeing the red rose, picked it and wore it

The gipsy girl, who had seen him do this, said to the villagers, "I shall throw myself from the top of the hill if he does not throw away that red rose."

The young man said, "No, I shall not throw away the red rose, and she is free to do as she wishes about it."

The gipsy girl repeated her threat ~~three times~~ ^{threat -- repeated three times} three times, and each time the young man refused to throw away the red rose. They finally arrived at the village and came to his house. The young man quickly dismounted and planted the rose in front of the door. Immediately the rose grew into a big rose bush.

The young man married the gipsy girl, and, in time, they had several children. Among them, little Ali became the rose bush's favorite. Whenever he played by the rose bush, it would bud out into many beautiful red roses, but whenever the gipsy woman or the other children went near it, the bush would beat its branches against their heads and drop all its flowers onto the ground. The gipsy woman grew more and more angry and kept asking her

husband to cut down the huge bush and make a porch for their door, spoons for their meals, and cribs for their babies. Exasperated by his wife's ^{nagging -- of wife} nagging, he finally did cut down the huge rose bush, which by then was the size of a tree, and with its wood he made a porch for their front door, spoons for their meals, and cribs for their children. The cribs would contract and squeeze some of their children almost to death. The spoon that the gipsy woman used would dig into her mouth until it made a cut, and the porch would shake until the children and the woman were knocked off their feet. But little Ali's crib and spoon did not harm him, nor did he get knocked off his feet when he played on the porch.

The gipsy woman became so annoyed that she demanded that her husband tear off the porch, dismantle the cribs, and take the spoons made of rose wood and burn them all. The man had no choice but to comply with his wife's wishes. He tore down the porch, disassembled the cribs, gathered the spoons and burned the whole lot. He carefully placed the ashes in the fireplace and as he did so, he heard a soft moan come from the hearth.

When the ashes of the fireplace were cleaned out and thrown on the side of the road that week, the woman who herded water buffaloes -- ^{water} buffaloes with her husband took the ashes to sprinkle on her roof to make the mud dry. The next day when she returned from herding, she found her house bright and sparkling clean. She looked around for someone who might have cleaned the house but did not find anyone. The next day the same thing happened.

House -- miraculously cleaned

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On the day -- third she hid herself so that she could find out what was happening each day. A beautiful girl stepped down from the roof and started to clean the house. When the girl was through and ready to leave, the herder stepped out from her hiding place, and grabbed the girl by the arm, and asked, "Are you a human being or a fairy?"³

transform etc
from Allah to
end

unless

The girl answered, "I am one of God's creatures.

The herder then said, "From now on, you will be my own

daughter."

The young man, now the inheritor of his father's estate, raised horses -- raising of horses. The beautiful girl asked her new herder father to get a horse for her. He said, "Daughter, we have no way to care for or feed a horse."

The girl replied, "I shall care for and feed the horse."

The herder went and got a lame horse for her. They took the horse into the barn and washed him down thoroughly until the water running off the animal became a creek. Then she fed and fed the horse until he became big and strong.

Then one day the young man came to get his horse. She had whispered into the horse's ear that he should not get up until she had told him to do so three times. When the young man came, the horse would not get up to go. Finally, they called the girl

Hors - Super
hand

³When one encounters a creature of dubious origin, one utters the proverbial question, Inmisiin cinmisiin? ("Are you human being or jinn?")

In. cin. -- as formulaic expression

to get him up. She said, "Kuhey⁴lan, I have had no reward for my patience. What can I expect from you?"

When she repeated this three times, the horse got up and went with the young man. But the young man was intrigued by this saying. He felt there was a special meaning in her words, but he could not determine what it was. Curious, he had the girl invited to his home for a session of rug ^{weaving -- of rug} ~~weaving~~, and he asked that the women each tell her life story as they wove. He hid himself in a closet in order to hear what the girl would say. All the women told their life stories, and then asked the beautiful girl to tell hers.

The girl said to them, "My fate has been worse than that of a cooked chicken.⁵ ^{as symbol of distress} My past has been so bad that you should not ask me about it, nor should I tell it to you."

They urged her to tell them anyway, and so she proceeded to do so. When she had related all the misfortune that had befallen her, the young man left the closet. He went home, ^{pot -- huge} gathered his wife and children, and put them in a huge pot. He closed the lid, tied the pot to the tail of a very bad-natured donkey, and sent the donkey to the mountain. The rocks on the mountain road bounced the wife and the children to pieces. He

Excursion -- by being tied to tail of donkey

⁴This unusual proper name is probably constructed to have some special meaning, an instance of symbolic language. The meaning, if any, is not known to us.

⁵This is a proverbial expression.

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then married the beautiful girl, and they lived happily ever after, and so may the listeners.⁶

⁶ This variant of a widely distributed tale type is considerably truncated from that point in the story at which the heroine receives the lame horse. It becomes progressively more and more truncated as it comes to the end.